4 To the apostles of Jesus Christ God made known many of his secret things and inspired them to write or record the same. In this the apostle Paul was especially favored of the Lord, and his prayer for his brethren was that they might apply themselves to the gaining of a knowledge of the purpose of Jehovah and that they might be filled with wisdom and spiritual understanding. (Col. 1:9) But since the days of the apostles and until the coming of the Lord Jesus to the temple of Jehovah it has pleased God to keep secret many things pertaining to his purpose. For fifteen centuries the professed followers of Christ Jesus have without exception taught that the chief purpose of Jehovah is to save men and take some of them to heaven and to torment or destroy all the others. Within that period of time even the most devout followers of Christ Jesus have believed and held that God's chief purpose toward the human race is to save souls. Even during the Elijah period of the church the faithful followers of Christ Jesus in all good conscience believed and taught that God's chief purpose is to select 144,000 from the human race and to make them members of his royal temple and assistant rulers of the world and that he will also select an innumerable multitude from amongst men and make them servants to the royal house, and that later all the obedient of the human race would receive "restitution" blessings. Jehovah's chief purpose was not seen and appreciated by the modern-day followers of Christ Jesus until after the coming of the Lord to the temple. When the faithful ones were gathered to the temple, being born of God's woman and being the sons of God, they have since been taught by Jehovah, through Christ Jesus the Head of the temple company. (Isa. 54:13; 30:20) Among the Scriptures that could not be understood until after the coming of the Lord to the temple is that of Revelation concerning the "great multitude".

5 The theory and understanding concerning the "great multitude" held for many years, and still held by many, is in substance this: That the "great multitude" are a class of persons consecrated to God and begotten by God's spirit, and hence are the sons of God and a part of the church; that these have not faithfully performed their covenant, but have been negligent and have failed to obey God's commandments; that they have remained in the church denominational systems and have had no part in making known the kingdom of God; that although they have not faithfully performed their covenant to the best of their ability, but because they have not been entirely unfaithful to God, it is said that they must go through great tribulation which is provided for their testing, and that ultimately Jehovah will take them to heaven and give them a place as servants before the throne. There are to this day those who have been "elective elders" in the company of the Lord's people, and those in the company who have continued to hold to such "elective elders", that think that active service in bearing testimony to the name of Jehovah and to his kingdom is not at all necessary. Their conclusion is that, if one loves God (according to their own definition of "love"), and is sincere, such is sufficient to guarantee his salvation and to assure him some place in heaven; and that, if he does not become a member of the "little flock", God will give him a place in the "great multitude"; and that he will then be for ever in heaven in ease and comfort.

6 Do such conclusions appear to be reasonable and supported by the Word of God? The reasonable rule must be applied, because with Jehovah there is nothing unreasonable. (Isa. 1:18) Now we see that Jehovah's chief purpose is the vindication of his name; that men who maintain their integrity toward Jehovah are the ones who have any part in the vindication of Jehovah's name; that God has taken out from amongst men a people for his name and whom he permits to bear witness of and concerning himself and his kingdom to others, and that these, in order to be approved, must faithfully maintain their integrity toward God. In view of these indisputable truths, is it reasonable that God would have another spiritual class in heaven made up of those whom he has taken out of the human race and who have agreed to do his will but who, because of fear of men or the Devil's crowd, have compromised with Satan's organization and been, at least to a large degree, unfaithful unto the Lord and yet the Lord would give them a place in his heavenly organization? These questions must be considered in the light of the inspired words of the apostle, to wit: "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. 4:4-6.

7 The Scriptures disclose that God has called a class of persons and set before them the hope of being partakers with Christ in his suffering, and in his joy associated with him in his royal organization. (Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:5; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:11, 18; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 John 3:3) For many years we have been taught, and believed, that aside from the hope of membership in the body of Christ there is a secondary hope, or a "consolation hope", which is held out to the "great multitude" because they have not been wholly faithful, and that the great multitude, as well as the little flock, will finally experience a full realization of their hope in heaven. But considering the Scriptures bearing upon the great multitude, some pertinent questions are here propounded for consideration, and the proper consideration of such questions may enable us to get out of mind some of the things that are inconsistent, and which we have long held. The questions follow:

8 Are the great multitude, mentioned in Revelation seven, a spirit-begotten class, and will they ultimately attain perfection as spirit creatures? and will they have a place in heaven as servants of the royal house?

9 What scripture expresses Jehovah's purpose to

take out from the world two classes, making one class members of his royal house and the other spirit class servants of that royal house?

[10] Since the Scriptures show that spirit-begetting means that God brings forth and acknowledges as his son such a one as has previously exercised faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus by fully consecrating himself to do the will of God, and that such are called to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is there any Scriptural authority for saying that Jehovah gives such ones thus spirit-begotten the option of being wholly faithful unto death and receiving the crown of life or to be partially faithful and receive a different reward? If so, then would that not mean that the creature is not required to fully do the will of God, but that the creature may do his own will a part of the time at least?

[11] Does Jehovah require of his spirit-begotten sons taken from amongst men a strict performance of the covenant to do his will, or may those sons with impunity only partially do God's will and depend upon God to wink at their mistakes, indifference and lack of faithfulness and give them a place in the great multitude?

[12] Is the great multitude to be found in the church denominations, which multitude of persons have heard the command of God to come out therefrom but have failed and refused to do so because of fear to obey God's commandment?

[13] If the spirit-begotten sons of God are commanded to come out from the church systems, but for any reason fail or refuse to obey that commandment until at the very time of death, when such are "forced to obey", would not such a course of action be equivalent to a deathbed repentance? Do the Scriptures support the conclusion that one may do according to his selfish will a part of the time and until the time of death and then at that time repent of his negligent course and still receive everlasting blessings of the Lord in some part of Jehovah's spiritual organization?

[14] If the "great multitude" company is made up of those consecrated and spirit-begotten who have been only partially faithful to their covenant, would not that mean that Jehovah approves at least a degree of unfaithfulness? and is such a thing possible with Jehovah God?

[15] As to the first question, to wit, Is the great multitude a spirit-begotten company which become servants of the royal house of God? The answer must be in the negative. There is no scripture giving warrant to the conclusion that the great multitude is a spirit company or will be in the spiritual realm of the kingdom of God. In this and subsequent issues of *The Watchtower* endeavor will be made, by the Lord's grace, to set out the scriptures bearing upon this matter and kindred questions relating thereto. It appears to be the Lord's due time to make these matters concerning the "great multitude" to be understood; and that the knowledge and understanding thereof will bring joy to the remnant and increased zeal for the Lord and his kingdom seems to be quite evident.

[16] There are three points related to this matter that must be considered, and in one of the three positions mentioned it seems that the great multitude must be located. Therefore the great multitude must either (1) be identical with the entire body of Christ; or (2) be the specific members of that heavenly body taken out from the Gentiles; or (3) be the people of good will that flee to the Lord and become a part of his organization after the coming of the Lord Jesus to the temple.

[17] In the progressive steps of the unfolding of the Revelation which God gave to Jesus Christ, and which was made known to John by the angel of the Lord, John was told of the sealing of the servants of God. "And there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." (Rev. 7:4) After stating the number from each of the twelve tribes of Israel John wrote: "After this [After these things, *R.V.*]." The clear meaning is that after seeing the sealing work of the twelve tribes of Israel John next saw the "great multitude" tableau or moving picture. The words "after this" apply to the time of John's seeing rather than to the time-order of the appearance of these things seen. This conclusion is supported fully by reference to the same expression (Greek) *meta tauta* appearing at Revelation 4:1; 15:5; 18:1 and 19:1. John pictured the faithful remnant now on the earth, and it should be expected that the time-order of seeing by the remnant would be the same as that applying to John, that is to say, the remnant would first see or discern the 144,000 and the sealing of the same, and thereafter the remnant would see or discern the true meaning of the "great multitude". Consideration is given to the three points above named in their respective order, that we may properly locate the great multitude.

POINT ONE

[18] Is the great multitude identical with the body of Christ? that is to say, Is the great multitude the 144,000? Without a question of doubt the term "a great multitude" could, according to the Biblical rule, be properly applied to the 144,000, that is, the royal house. Recounting the fact that the people in great numbers followed Jesus Christ when he was on the earth, it is written that Jesus "saw a great multitude" and ministered unto them. (Matt. 14:14) A great multitude followed him. (Matt. 19:2) "And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him." (Matt. 20:29) "And there went great multitudes with him." (Luke 14:25) "In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1) "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice

of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. 19:6) The great multitude mentioned in this last text is undoubtedly the host that is praising Jehovah, and which includes the remnant or faithful followers of Christ Jesus on earth when they learn that Jehovah has enthroned Christ Jesus as King. (*Light*, Book Two, pages 150-158) This does not at all mean, however, that the great multitude of Revelation 7:9 is the same as that mentioned in 19:6. Some have contended that they are one and the same great multitude because the 144,000 creatures constitute a great multitude and do participate in the praise of Jehovah. But if that be true, then why would the Lord specify 144,000 and then again specifically describe them as another company that are without number? There does not seem to be any reason to conclude that the great multitude of Revelation 7:9 are identical with the 144,000 described in Revelation 7:4-8.

POINT TWO

19 Revelation 7:4-8 specifically mentions the twelve tribes of Israel and that of each tribe there are sealed 12,000, making a total of 144,000. Since the Scriptures show that God takes out a part of the body of Christ from amongst the Gentiles, the contention of some is that the great multitude of Revelation 7:9 is made up of the Gentiles, that is, those taken from the Gentiles, and hence that no specific number is given to them as such; that these are the ones who are brought in and grafted onto the "olive tree", the new covenant. If that contention is true, then the body of Christ is composed of more than 144,000. The statement at Revelation 7:9 is, "a great multitude, which no man could number." Neither John nor any man since his time could number them. If Jehovah does not state the number although numerable, then it remains one of the 'secret things that belong to Jehovah'. (Deut. 29:29) But this would not necessarily negative the proof that the great multitude is a part of the body of Christ.

20 Concerning the 'Seed of promise' Jehovah said to Abraham: "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." (Gen. 15:5) "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. 22:17, 18.

21 Abraham could not number the stars of heaven nor the sands upon the seashore, and yet God used these words as relating to the 'Seed of promise', the Christ. Manifestly the words which Jehovah addressed to Abraham concerning the stars and the sands were merely to illustrate the point that Jehovah selects the heavenly company and no man can tell anything definitely about it unless God reveals it to him. It does not at all mean that God could not number them, but it does mean that no man can number them. It would not be necessary to add others to the 144,000 in order to make the grand total "a great multitude, which no man could number". Abraham could not number the 144,000 unless God revealed that number to him. If it be argued that the "great multitude" applies to the Gentiles taken out for Jehovah's name, and that these must be added to the 144,000 Israelites to make up the 'Seed of promise', then it follows that "Abraham's seed" would have to be like the sands upon the seashore as to number and like the stars in the heaven, which would be many times more than the entire number of human creatures that have ever existed. The testimony of men concerning the stars is that there appear to man 125,000 faint nebulae, each of which is composed of billions of suns bigger and brighter than the sun that lights the earth. The galaxy of the milky way visible to human creatures is said to contain a hundred billion suns. The entire human race that ever existed does not nearly measure up to that number.

22 Relating to the same matter Jehovah caused Jeremiah to write: "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me." (Jer. 33:22) This does not at all mean that God does not know the number of the 'Seed of promise', but it clearly does mean that no man unaided by the Lord could possibly know. The stars and sands, therefore, must have been used merely to illustrate this point. Concerning the stars it is written, in Psalm 147:4, 5: "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite." Clearly the meaning of God's statement is that "the Seed of Abraham" is composed of a great many, but that no man could know the number thereof unless the number were revealed to him by Jehovah. No man could tell what God predestinates. Jehovah specifically designates the 144,000 as those who are sealed as his servants to carry out his purpose. But what man is he that could number these unless the facts were revealed to him by Jehovah? Therefore the 144,000 sealed ones could be and are, within the Scriptural meaning and bounds, numerically like the stars of the heavens and the sands of the seashore, "innumerable" to man.

23 The fact that John "heard" the number of those that were sealed and that there were sealed 144,000 is conclusive proof that Jehovah God through Christ Jesus revealed to man that great truth and in no other way could he get it; and the further fact that John thereafter beheld "a great multitude, which no man could number", shows that the number thereof is one of Jehovah's secrets not revealed and that therefore the 144,000 and the "great multitude" of Revelation 7:9 are not of the same class, but are separate and distinct companies.

[24] That the "great multitude" is "of all nations [out of every nation, *R.V.*], and kindreds, and people, and tongues": based upon this fact the argument is advanced by some that the Gentiles who become spiritual Israelites have been scattered amongst all the nations and now are brought together as one nation and added to the twelve tribes that were taken from natural Israel and made spiritual Israelites, and that all of these constitute one nation. The context does not support that view. This statement of the text relative to the nations and tongues manifestly is used to show, not that the "great multitude" were not originally the natural descendants of Abraham called "Jews", but that they do not become the spiritual Jews or Israelites, forming a part of the 144,000. The Gentiles taken out from amongst the nations for God's name do become spiritual Israelites, and therefore must be included in the body members of Christ, who are sealed as the servants of God. At one time these were not a people, but, having been taken out from amongst the Gentiles and adopted as the sons of God, and thereby becoming spiritual Israelites, they are now of the royal nation and they are "the people of God". (1 Pet. 2:9, 10) This being so, the "great multitude" are not in the covenant for the kingdom, and therefore could not be the Gentile members of the body of Christ nor of the same class; nor are they spirit-begotten. This conclusion is supported by Revelation 14:1-5. There the statement, in substance, is that the 144,000 stand with Christ Jesus at Mount Zion and that these learn the new song, which no others could learn or sing except the 144,000; that these are the ones that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, that is to say, they are footstep followers of Christ Jesus. This latter text shows that the "great multitude" could not possibly picture the Gentile extraction of the body of Christ, because all the members thereof surely must and do stand with Christ Jesus on Mount Zion, following him whithersoever he goes, and learn to sing the new song. The 144,000 being definitely revealed by Jehovah to man, and the great multitude being an innumerable company not revealed to man, and the 144,000 being the only ones that stand with Christ Jesus on Mount Zion, shows that "the great multitude" could not possibly apply to the Gentile extraction making up the members of Jehovah's royal house. The Scriptural proof submitted shows that the "great multitude" are not identical with the body of Christ. Prior to the coming of Christ Jesus to the temple "this gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 24:14) was not preached to the various nations as a witness, and at no time has there been a great multitude in line for the kingdom, and who were at one time on the earth. The kingdom company has been gathered during a period of nineteen centuries, and, taken as a whole, the Lord Jesus designates the same as a "little flock" to whom Jehovah gives the kingdom. Since the Scriptures show that the great multitude has not been taken out from the Gentiles and made a part of the body of Christ, then what is the class of persons that do compose that great multitude?

POINT THREE

[25] The Scriptures are found to be in reason and entirely consistent and reasonable, and there is neither reason nor scripture to support the conclusion that God permits certain creatures of the human race to become his spiritual sons and gives a great prize to those who are entirely faithful unto death, and gives a less prize to those who are indifferent and less faithful all the days of their existence on earth, and who show greater faith at the time of death. Jehovah God is entirely consistent. The "great multitude" are not a spirit-begotten company; that is to say, they are never brought forth and acknowledged by Jehovah as his spiritual sons. The only Scriptural conclusion concerning the great multitude described at Revelation 7:9-17, therefore, is that those who go to make up that company are at other places in the Scriptures designated as "other sheep", the 'people of good will', the 'Jonadab class'. Consideration is now given to the scriptures in support of the conclusion that the great multitude are of the class here last mentioned.

[26] The year 1918, according to the worldly calendar, marks the time when the Lord came to the temple of Jehovah, and also marks the end of the Elijah period of the church. From that time until the autumn season of the year following, to wit, 1919, the servant class or remnant were in exile, and which is pictured by John's being exiled on the isle of Patmos. The servant class must be released from exile in order to carry out the command of the Lord concerning the preaching of "this gospel of the kingdom" to the world as a witness before the final end comes. (Matt. 24:14) Concerning this identical work the servant class once in exile receives from the Lord this commandment, to wit: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." (Rev. 10:11) The latter part of 1919 marks the beginning of the Elisha period of the church and the work incident thereto, and by the time this company reached 1922 that service work was organized and under way, and it was then that "this gospel of the kingdom" was being carried to the nations, peoples and tongues, that is to say, the common people, and also to the "kings" or rulers of the earth. Thereafter God's remnant discerned, by his grace, that there must be a great witness work done concerning God's kingdom and that such work must continue "until the cities [organization of Satan] be wasted without [an] inhabitant, . . . and the land be utterly desolate". (Isa. 6:11) It was in the year 1922 that the Lord's faithful people first came to a knowledge and understanding of this scripture last cited. The remnant, that is to say, Jehovah's witnesses, received from the hand of God's angel the message of the gospel of the kingdom, which they must preach; as it is written: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the

everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Rev. 14:6) It has been since the coming of the Lord to the temple, and particularly since 1922, that "this gospel of the kingdom" has been preached in many languages and distributed amongst the peoples of the various nations in printed form in millions of books, magazines, and so forth. This gospel has been preached to the kings or ruling factors of the world by giving them notice and warning, which notice and warning was printed and distributed throughout the earth; and this gospel has also been preached to the people of good will according to the commandment of the Lord. It is those that hear, understand and respond to the gospel message by consecrating themselves to do God's will, and then seek meekness and righteousness, that receive God's approval and blessing. There is no reason to hold that the "great multitude" company have been in existence as such a multitude all during the time God has been 'taking out a people for his name'. The theory that God's chief purpose is the salvation of men has led us in times past to accept the conclusion that he would give a place in heaven with Christ on his throne to those who showed the highest degree of faith, and a place of less honor to those who were all their lifetime babes and who never showed the degree of zeal for the Lord or faithfulness that they could show. When we come to see Jehovah's chief purpose is the vindication of his name and that it is those taken out for his name that preach the gospel, as a witness, then we are enabled, by the Lord's grace, to locate the great multitude class.

POSITION

27 Concerning the great multitude the scripture reads that they "stood before the throne". The fact that they "stood" shows that they are approved by the Most High, because "the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous". (Ps. 1:5) Stand where? Would they have to go to heaven in order to stand approved before the Lord? Certainly not; nor would they have to be in heaven in order to stand before the throne, even in reference to position or with reference to approval. While standing before the throne those of the great multitude are shown to be hungry and thirsty, whereas if they were in heaven there would be no occasion for them to hunger and thirst. Those who are hungry and thirsty for spiritual provender are the ones on earth who are seeking to be fed on that which will satisfy their heart's desire. Manifestly the great multitude are here shown as standing before the judgment throne of Christ Jesus, that is, the throne of God and where God, by proxy, judges, that is to say, Jehovah judges by his beloved Son, to whom he has committed all judgment. It is written that those who stand before the throne are crying out: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." —Rev. 7:10.

28 It was in 1914 that Jehovah put his beloved Son on the throne of authority. (Ps. 2:6) In the year 1918, or three and one-half years after enthroned, Christ Jesus began judgment at the temple. In standing before the Lord for judgment these need not be in heaven, for the reason, it is stated by Jesus, that when he assumes his throne for the judgment of the nations all nations shall be gathered before him, and surely these nations are not in heaven. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."—Matt. 25:31, 32.

29 According to the language of Revelation 7:9, therefore, the great multitude are seen standing before the throne of Jehovah and before the Lamb, that is to say, God's throne and the throne of judgment of Christ Jesus. Jesus Christ sits in the throne with Jehovah, that is to say, as the special Judge who renders judgment at Jehovah's throne. (Rev. 3:21) With whom does Christ Jesus begin judgment upon assuming his high office as Judge upon the throne? Not with the dead, but with the living. "The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the [living] . . . at his appearing and his kingdom." (2 Tim. 4:1) The resurrection of the human dead has not taken place at the time when this judgment begins, nor does it take place until the kingdom company or royal house are first resurrected and in heaven. Christ Jesus is at the temple upon his throne of judgment and glory, and before him are gathered all the nations for the purpose of separating and judging. Even so the great multitude are "of all nations", and therefore not in heaven, but on the earth, and are before Christ Jesus for judgment, which judgment shows that it is those of good will, who take the side of the Lord and who become the 'sheep of the Lord', that stand before the Lord the great Judge as approved, "and he shall set the sheep on his right hand." To the "sheep" Christ Jesus says: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These are the ones that get life eternal, on the earth. (Matt. 25:32-46) While being judged they are on the earth, but 'in the sight of' Christ Jesus, because now he is giving attention to them, although no human eyes can see the Lord; nor is it necessary for any of the great multitude to see with the natural eye the one "before" (*enoopion*) whom they stand and are judged. In the following texts the same Greek adverb *enoopion* is translated "in . . . sight of", that is, 'to see': Romans 3:20; 12:17; 1 Timothy 2:3; Revelation 13:13, 14. (Rev. 14:10) Those composing the great multitude learn that Christ Jesus is at the temple, upon his throne for judgment, and they discern this truth although they do not see him with their natural eyes.

30 Further describing the great multitude these words are used: "Clothed with white robes." In verse fourteen of this picture is stated the means by which their robes were made white. The words "white robes" used in verse nine symbolically declare that members of the great multitude stand before the throne as approved ones.

31 At Revelation 6:9-11 a class of faithful men is described who suffered martyrdom because of their complete devotion to Jehovah, and to them "white robes were given". But it is not stated that they first "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb". The white robes given to those faithful men symbolically testify to their approval, without stating how they were made white.

32 They were faithful unto Jehovah even unto death, proving their integrity; and while the scripture does not state that they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, other scriptures plainly teach that they had and exercised faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus.

33 The scripture at Hebrews eleven describes another class of faithful men who suffered martyrdom because of their complete devotion to Jehovah, and which class of men received Jehovah's approval. But it is not said of them that they even had white robes, nor is anything said about washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Nor is such a description necessary. At the time the faithful men of old maintained their integrity toward God the blood of the Lamb had not actually been shed.

34 Concerning the faithful overcoming remnant it is written: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Rev. 3:4, 5) The ones mentioned here as approved have not defiled their garments. Neither defiled garments nor nakedness would be permitted in the temple service. The great multitude serve God at the temple and must be clothed with clean and undefiled garments and have an acceptable appearance before God and Christ Jesus.

35 Revelation 3:17, 18 describes a class that are self-satisfied, yet who are blind and naked and are counseled to buy "white raiment" that they may be clothed and that their shame and nakedness do not appear. Such has no reference to the great multitude, but to a class which the Lord rejects.

36 Revelation 19:8 describes the Lamb's wife to whom is granted that she be arrayed in fine linen clean and white. But that text has no reference to the great multitude. What, then, is pictured by the robes given the individual members of the great multitude with which they are clothed? These white robes picture that they are clean and approved. Cleanliness results by reason of faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. (Rev. 1:5) The great multitude by reason of their faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus, and devoting themselves to God, thereby wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb and make themselves clean.

37 Every human creature that obtains life must obtain it as a gift of God through Christ Jesus, and this is the only way; and all such must have their sins washed away by exercising faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus. The people of good will, that is to say, the Jonadab class, are those who have faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus as the only means of redemption and salvation for the human race, and these voluntarily agree to do the will of God; and in taking this step of consecrating themselves to God by faith in the blood of Christ Jesus they stand approved before the judgment seat of Christ, and this approval is symbolized by the white robes which John observed that they wore. These keep their robes clean by continuing in faith and devotion to God and Christ Jesus, his anointed King. The great multitude, therefore, could not come into existence until the Lord Jesus Christ appeared at the temple and began his judgment, and therefore the great multitude could not appear prior to 1918.

PALMS

38 Further relating his vision of the great multitude standing before the throne, John says that they had "palms in their hands". Here John pictures the remnant beholding the great multitude with palms in their hands. These have taken their stand on the side of Christ Jesus and Jehovah God, and this is shown by the fact that they stand before the throne of God and the Lamb clothed in white robes. What, then, is the meaning of "palms in their hands"? It was in 1918 that the "precious corner stone" was laid in Zion in its completeness, when Christ Jesus was presented to Zion as Jehovah's King. In due time the remnant saw that this Chief Corner Stone had been laid in completeness, and they rejoiced. Thereafter others learned this great truth and believed it and hailed Jehovah's anointed Ruler, Christ Jesus, as the world's rightful King. Having palms in their hands symbolically says, This great multitude hails Christ Jesus as the King and rightful Ruler of the world and the Savior of mankind. When Christ Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon the ass and presented himself as King this was the laying of the Corner Stone in miniature, and foreshadowed the laying of the Corner Stone in completeness when Christ appears at the temple as King. When the Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem he was there hailed by the multitude as King, as it is written: "And a very great multitude [And the most part of the multitude (*R.V.*)] spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna

to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!"—Matt. 21:8, 9.

39 In recording the account of the miniature laying of the Corner Stone John wrote: "On the morrow a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried out, Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel." (John 12:12, 13, *A.R.V.*) In the gospel by John and in The Revelation John makes mention of the palm branches, and that in connection with the great multitude. Thus at the miniature laying of the Corner Stone what took place foreshadowed that which John saw in vision of the laying of the Corner Stone in completeness.

40 Let this be carefully noted, that when Jesus entered Jerusalem the great multitude that spread down their garments and waved their palm branches were not then the disciples of Jesus Christ, as the facts subsequently showed. Only a short time before that triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem he had addressed his disciples, speaking to them as a "little flock". It was afterwards and when Jesus was riding upon an ass as king that the great multitude appears and shouts: "Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah." Likewise when Jesus Christ is enthroned, the great multitude are not recognized, discerned and understood and are not the disciples of Christ Jesus. It is after he is presented as King and seated upon his throne of judgment that the great multitude is discerned with palms in their hands. It seems, therefore, that the miniature laying of the Corner Stone in Zion and the incidents connected therewith picture the laying of the Corner Stone in completeness and the events that co-ordinated therewith. This would prove that the great multitude mentioned in Revelation 7:9 began to come into existence after the Lord appeared at the temple for judgment.

41 Manifestly those with "palms in their hands", as mentioned in Revelation, are not the footstep followers of Christ Jesus, that is to say, the remnant on earth, but that great multitude is made up of others who hear about Jehovah and his kingdom under Christ and who desire that kingdom. It is seen that these are gathered out of the nations and tribes, kindreds, peoples and tongues; and when they learn that God's gracious kingdom has come, they take their stand on the side of Jehovah and his King and they wave their palm branches as an evidence that they are heartily in accord with and support the King, about whom they have learned.

42 When human creatures learn of something that is to their great benefit it is difficult for them to refrain from giving expression to their joy. No good news could come to man that would make him so glad as the news that salvation is provided for him. This is shown to be the frame of mind of those who compose the great multitude standing before the throne with palms in their hands and with what they see as they there stand. Concerning this John writes: "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—Rev. 7:10.

43 This great multitude cried out with gladness, even as the great multitude cried out with gladness at the miniature laying of God's Corner Stone, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem. When the people of earth of good will learn that the King of righteousness has come and that God has provided salvation by and through the blood of Christ Jesus and his kingdom, and that there is no other means of salvation, they shout the praises of Jehovah, who is the Author of salvation, and they devote themselves to his service. The people of good will on the earth today who hear the truth do not remain mum, but vigorously join Jehovah's witnesses, the remnant, in crying out the kingdom message. They have the good news which they have received at the mouth of Jehovah's witnesses, which witnesses at the command of the Lord their King have brought to the "sheep" class and have said to them: "Let him that heareth say, Come." (Rev. 22:17) And being thus invited this sheep class, the Jonadabs, do say to others: 'Come and learn the only way of salvation.' This is shown by the words of Revelation 7:10, when those of the "great multitude" class are saying to others: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

44 When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, in A.D. 33, the great multitude then cried out in the words of the Psalm, or song, previously written: "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity." (Ps. 118:25) They shouted: "Hosanna to the son of David." The Hebrew word *Hosanna* means "Save now, we beseech thee"; which is the language of Psalm 118:25, *R.V.* Likewise when Christ Jesus the Chief Corner Stone of Jehovah's organization is laid in Zion in completeness, his faithful followers begin to cry out: "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord; this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord; we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord." (Ps. 118: 19-26) Since then the people of good will now on earth, the sheep class, the Jonadabs, who have heard the glad cry of Jehovah's witnesses, have also taken up that blessed message and continued to cry it out that others might hear.

45 "Salvation" consists in the vindication of Jehovah's name and his Word, and results to those who maintain their integrity toward him, and who praise his holy name. There is no other means of salvation, and that salvation comes to those who heartily avail themselves of Jehovah's means for their salvation. (Acts 4:11, 12) The Devil deceives the people and turns them away from God, and puts forth his agents who claim that the salvation of the people comes by reason of his agents. A striking example of this is the exaltation of one Hitler in Germany. He issues the command that all persons shall "Heil Hitler", which in the English language means "Salvation is by Hitler". But all people who have faith in God know that neither Hitler, Mussolini, the NRA scheme nor any other scheme nor any creature can bring salvation to the people. Those who have faith in God and in Christ Jesus, and who take their stand on the side of God and his kingdom, by their course of action loudly acknowledge, confess and acclaim Jehovah as their Savior, which salvation is given to them through Christ Jesus, and these are represented in the Revelation account as saying: "Salvation to our God [Jehovah] which sitteth upon the throne, and [salvation] unto the Lamb [Christ Jesus]." Thus all such "Heil Jehovah and Christ". They do not "Heil Hitler" nor any other creature, and they could not be faithful to Jehovah God by exclaiming to any creature "Heil", for the reason that no creature has any power of salvation. These persons of good will now discern and gladly confess Jehovah as King Eternal and the Supreme One, and that Jehovah, and Christ Jesus, his anointed King, together constitute "the Higher Powers", to which powers all persons that get life must be subject. Those people of good will hear and believe that the kingdom of God under Christ has come and that Jehovah reigns, and they cry out, as it is written in the Psalm: "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." (97:1) This corresponds with the cry of A.D. 33 by the great multitude of that time; and now the great multitude of the present day cries out: 'Salvation is come; save now, send us prosperity.' They attribute the work of God's salvation or vindication unto his great Vindicator, Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, who sits upon the throne, which Jehovah God has provided for him, and that their own salvation is from Jehovah by and through Christ Jesus, and not from any other source. The facts and the evidence that have come to pass during the past five years conclusively prove that the great multitude is made up of human creatures who hear and accept and rejoice in the Kingdom of God under Christ. The palms in their hands in effect say: "We hail our King and Savior; our allegiance and our devotion are to him. Our salvation comes from Him, the King Eternal, who is Jehovah, and through Christ Jesus, his anointed Ruler of the world." They openly confess that they are on the Lord's side.

TEMPLE ASSEMBLY

46 At this point in the vision had by John, as recorded in Revelation seven, there appears an assembly of those who are wholly devoted to Jehovah. Mark now who are shown to be present at that assembly: "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God." (Rev. 7:11) Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, is seated upon his throne of glory. By authority from Jehovah God he took that exalted place in 1914, but it was three and one-half years thereafter, until the assembly at the temple took place, when he comes for judgment. Standing round about the throne, as shown in the Revelation picture, are all the holy angels. This must refer to the time described by Jude: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints [holy ones, *R.V.*], to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15) That marks the time of the appearing of the Lord Jesus at the temple for judgment. Moses had prophesied of the same thing, when he said: "The Lord . . . came with ten thousands of saints [holy ones, *R.V.*]." (Deut. 33:2) These holy angels are assembled for the service of Jehovah and Christ Jesus, and the Revelation picture shows that it was the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus to the temple; and this is further supported by the words of Jesus, to wit: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." (Matt. 25:31) It is the judgment seat of Jehovah, and there is seated Christ Jesus as the presiding Justice to render judgment. The apostle Paul, describing this same thing, says: "Ye are come . . . to the general assembly . . . and to God the Judge of all, . . . and to Jesus." (Heb. 12:22-24) The judgment at the temple begins with the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17; Mal. 3:3) By these scriptures the time is definitely fixed and proves beyond all doubt that the great multitude of Revelation 7:9 does not appear until after the coming of the Lord to the temple, and that could not have been possible prior to 1918 and was, in fact, later and after the pouring out of the holy spirit on all of God's servant class.—Acts 2:17, 18.

47 Note that Revelation 7:9 gives the description of the great multitude, that these "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb", whereas the description of the assembly of the temple company, as stated in Revelation 7:11, says: "The angels stood round about the throne." The temple assembly includes the holy angels, the elders and the four living creatures, as shown by Revelation 4:4, to wit: "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting,

clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold."—Rev. 4:4.

48 Those "four and twenty elders" include all those who are able ministers of the new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6), and which includes the remnant, that is, Jehovah's witnesses, because these have been brought to maturity in Christ and have become elders in fact. No one could be of this elder class until he is an elder in fact by reason of being in Christ and brought to maturity.—Eph. 4:11-13.

49 This time is fixed by the cleansing of the temple, which God's people discerned for the first time as occurring in 1932, and now Jehovah permits them to discern the true meaning of the great multitude. These elders are shown as standing with Christ Jesus, because they are his brethren. (Heb. 2:11) These elders are therefore "ambassadors for Christ". (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20) This picture, therefore, shows the 144,000 present at the assembly, which assembly could not take place until the coming of the Lord to the temple; and therefore the great multitude could not be in existence until after that time.

50 The vision also discloses Jehovah's four-square universal organization composed of his living creatures, all supporting Jehovah and appearing in complete contrast with Satan's organization; and this is shown by the words (verse 11): "The four beasts [four living creatures, *R.V.*]"; "full of eyes before and behind." (Rev. 4:6) Jehovah and Christ Jesus are in the throne, and the four living creatures, picturing Jehovah's universal organization, are round about the throne. (See *Light*, Book One, page 57.) Jehovah's organization, appearing to the remnant, is one of the 'two great signs in heaven' (Rev. 12:1), and is in exact contrast with the other great sign appearing and which sign pictures the Devil's organization. These two great signs appear for the first time at the birth of the kingdom, but they were discerned by Jehovah's faithful people on earth for the first time about 1924, and here we are more than ten years later discerning the Scriptural meaning of "the great multitude". Those who compose the great multitude must first receive some information in order to know of the two great organizations, pictured by the signs, before they could choose; and therefore it is certain that the great multitude could not come into existence until after the appearing of the Lord Jesus at the temple, and after that the "other sheep" class receive the information at the mouth of Jehovah's witnesses. This sheep class, receiving the information, align themselves on the side of Jehovah and his King, and they get up into the "chariot", that is to say, the organization of Jehovah, at the invitation of the Greater Jehu, and thus they go along with Jehovah's witnesses. This is further supported by the prophetic picture of Jehu taking Jonadab by the hand and helping him into the chariot and Jonadab accompanying Jehu to the vindication of Jehovah's name. The fulfillment of this picture is the Lord Jesus Christ at the temple inviting the Jonadab class into his organization and leading them along to see the vindication of Jehovah's name.

51 The vision of the temple assembly shows all the angels and all the elders and all the living creatures, that is, all of Jehovah's organization, giving praise and worship to God. And they "fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God". This is in exact accord with the statement of Revelation four, to wit: That the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders "fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever". (Rev. 4:8-10) This they do regardless of all opposition, and they do not ask any creature or any part of Satan's organization as to how they shall worship God and when they shall worship him, but all these of Jehovah's organization do worship God according to his commandments. Thus it is seen again that it would be entirely contrary to God's will for Jehovah's witnesses to ask permission of any of the worldly organization or for a license to engage in preaching the gospel. All of these faithful ones of Jehovah have decisively settled the matter as to whom they will worship, and therefore they worship Jehovah God in spirit and in truth. These witnesses of Jehovah now bear testimony, or 'the fruit of the kingdom', before the people of good will, and these latter ones do see their privilege of taking their stand on the side of Jehovah and of giving praise and service to him; and this they do.

52 If the position as taken is correct, to wit, that the great multitude is not a spirit or heavenly company, but is made up of the people of good will now on earth, that is to say, the sheep class, or Jonadabs, and who since the coming of the Lord to the temple have received some knowledge of the truth and taken their stand on the side of Jehovah and his kingdom, then why, as stated in Revelation 7:11, are the angels of God and the entire universal organization shown at this point as worshiping Jehovah, and what relationship, if any, does such worship bear to the great multitude? This important question will be considered in the next issue.

(*To be continued*)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

¶ 1, 2. What do the Scriptures say of the wisdom of Jehovah, and of the certainty of performance of his declared purpose? To whom does he make known his purpose, and when?

¶ 3. Explain whether the expression "God will overrule it" is in harmony with Romans 8:28 or other scriptures. What is to be done when one discovers that he has taken a wrongful course?

¶ 4. Show that the apostle's desire expressed at Colossians 1:9 has been fulfilled. Account for the present clearer understanding of Jehovah's purpose.

¶ 5. What has been the theory and understanding for many years advanced, and generally accepted, concerning the "great multitude"?

¶ 6-14. What is now seen to be Jehovah's purpose in taking out a people from among men? What questions reasonably call for consideration in examining the scriptures bearing upon the "great multitude"?